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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4275th meeting of the Security Council, held on 9 February 2001, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council, recalling all previous resolutions and statements of its President regarding the situation in Eritrea and Ethiopia, notes with appreciation the Secretary-General's progress report of 12 January 2001 (S/2001/45) and subsequent update pertaining to the matter.

"The Security Council reaffirms the commitment of all Member States to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Eritrea and Ethiopia, and further reaffirms its continued commitment to a peaceful definitive settlement of the conflict.

"The Security Council, reiterating its strong support for the Agreement of Cessation of Hostilities signed by the parties in Algiers on 18 June 2000 (S/2000/601), strongly welcomes and supports the subsequent Peace Agreement between the Government of the State of Eritrea and the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (S/2000/1183) signed in Algiers on 12 December 2000 ('Algiers Agreement'). It commends the efforts of the Organization of African Unity, the President of Algeria and his Special Envoy, as well as the United States of America and the European Union for their role in achieving the Algiers Agreement.

"The Security Council encourages both parties to continue working towards the full and prompt implementation of the Algiers Agreement. In this connection, it further welcomes the agreement reached by the parties on 6 February 2001 to move forward with the establishment of the Temporary Security Zone on 12 February 2001.

"The Security Council expresses its strong support for the Secretary-General's role in continuing to help implement the Algiers Agreement, including through his own good offices, for the efforts of his Special Representative and for the contributions of relevant United Nations entities.

"The Security Council notes with satisfaction that the Algiers Agreement includes mechanisms for the delimitation and demarcation of the common border and for addressing claims and compensation, and that the parties are

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cooperating with the Secretary-General in these matters in accordance with agreed schedules. It draws the urgent attention of Member States to the fact that funds provided to date for border delimitation and demarcation, through the United Nations Trust Fund established under resolution 1177 (1998) of 26 June 1998, remain clearly inadequate to meet the expenses of the Boundary Commission for the work entrusted to it under the Algiers Agreement. While expressing appreciation to those Member States that have already contributed financially, the Council calls upon Member States to consider providing further support to the peace process, including through contributions to the voluntary Trust Fund in order to assist the parties in rapid delimitation and demarcation of the common border in accordance with resolution 1312 (2000) of 31 July 2000 and in accordance with the Algiers Agreement.

"The Security Council notes with appreciation the expeditious deployment of the United Nations Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE) allowing the parties to redeploy and rearrange their forces as scheduled. It expresses appreciation to the troop-contributing countries and to those Member States that have provided UNMEE with additional assets.

"The Security Council urges the parties to cooperate fully and expeditiously with UNMEE in the implementation of its mandate, including through the complete redeployment of troops consistent with the Algiers Agreement, the establishment of a direct air corridor between Addis Ababa and Asmara to ensure freedom of movement for UNMEE flights, and the conclusion of the necessary Status of Forces Agreements, including identifying suitable accommodation sites for UNMEE.

"The Security Council further urges the parties to facilitate mine action in coordination with the United Nations Mine Action Service, including through exchanging and providing existing maps and any other relevant information to the United Nations. It notes with concern that mines and unexploded ordnance remain the pre-eminent threat to the safety and security of UNMEE troops and the population in and around the future Temporary Security Zone. It calls upon the international community to support generously non-governmental organizations with resources, skills and expertise in demining so that, in coordination with UNMEE and the United Nations country teams, they can assist both Governments in this undertaking.

"The Security Council encourages both parties to continue to exercise restraint and to implement confidence-building measures, to continue the release and voluntary and orderly return under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) of civilians that remain interned, to release remaining prisoners of war and facilitate their return under the auspices of the ICRC, and to fulfil their commitments under the Algiers Agreement to afford humane treatment to each other's nationals and persons of each other's national origin.

"The Security Council calls on the parties to ensure the continued safe and unhindered access of humanitarian assistance to those in need, to guarantee the safety and security of all UNMEE, ICRC and other humanitarian personnel and to respect strictly the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law.

"The Security Council recognizes that the effects of the war have exacted a heavy toll on the civilian populations of Eritrea and Ethiopia, including through the internal displacement and outflow of refugees. It urges the respective Governments to continue to redirect their efforts towards the reconstruction and development of both economies, to work towards reconciliation with a view to normalizing their relations, and to engage in constructive cooperation with the other neighbouring States in the Horn of Africa, with a view to achieving stability in the subregion. It further urges contributions from the international community, including the United Nations agencies and the international financial institutions, in support of the reconstruction efforts of both countries.

"The Security Council remains seized of the matter."